

Motivational Interviewing: Preparing People to Change

Tips Sheet

Five General Principles of Motivational Interviewing:

1. Express empathy
2. Develop discrepancy
3. Avoid argumentation
4. Roll with resistance
5. Support self-efficacy

Responses that are NOT Reflective Listening:

- Ordering, directing, or commanding
- Warning or threatening
- Giving advice, making suggestions or providing solutions
- Persuading with logic, arguing, or lecturing
- Moralizing, preaching, or telling teachers what they should do
- Disagreeing, judging, criticizing, or blaming
- Agreeing, approving, or praising
- Shaming, ridiculing, or labeling
- Interpreting or analyzing
- Reassuring, sympathizing, or consoling
- Questioning or probing

Assumptions to Avoid:

- This person OUGHT to change
- This person WANTS to change
- The students' best interests are not the prime motivating factor for him/her
- If the teacher does not decide to change, the consultation has failed
- Individuals are either motivated to change, or they're not
- Now is the right time to consider change
- A tough approach is always best
- I'm the expert. The teacher must follow my advice
- A negotiation approach is always best

Signs of Resistance:

Arguing

- Challenging
- Discounting
- Hostility

Interrupting

- Talking over
- Cutting off

Ignoring

- Inattention
- Non-answer
- No response
- Sidetracking

Denying

- Blaming
- Disagreeing
- Excusing
- Claiming impunity
- Minimizing
- Pessimism

- Reluctance
- Minimizing
- Pessimism
- Unwilling to change

Strategies for Handling Resistance

- Reflective listening Acknowledgement of teacher's disagreement, emotion or perception
- Double-sided reflection Acknowledge what the teacher has said and add it to the other side of the teacher's ambivalence
- Clarification Verify your understanding matches the teacher's perspective
- Shifting Focus Shift attention away from what appears to be a stumbling block
- Emphasize personal choice or control Assure that in the end, it is the teacher who determines what happens
- Amplified reflection Highlight the extreme position implied by the teacher in order to elicit change talk
- Coming alongside Reflection that takes the side against change to create the possibility the teacher will argue for change
- Reframing Reflection that offers a new, positive interpretation of a teacher statement
- Agreeing with a twist Simple reflection with a reframe

Specific MI Strategies

The RULEs of MI

1. Resist the righting reflex
2. Understand a teachers motivation for change
3. Listen: the teacher should make 9 of every 10 statements
4. Empower the teacher

Use Your OARS

1. Open-ended questions
2. Affirmations
3. Reflective statements
4. Summaries

Elicit Change Talk

Ask evocative questions about

1. Desire for change
2. Ability/Optimism about change
3. Reasons/Benefits of change
4. Need/Disadvantages of status quo/problem recognition
5. Commitment/Intention to change
6. Looking forward or back
7. Querying extremes
8. Connecting responses to values

Miller, W.R., & Rollnick, S. (2002). *Motivational interviewing: Preparing people for change*. New York: Guilford Press.

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